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Jun 16, 2005

DOCUMENT-IDENTIFIER: US 20050131808 A1

TITLE: Method for establishing control over credit card transactionsAbstract Paragraph:

A method for controlling credit card transactions includes establishing a transaction supporting banking account, a credit limit, and an active account portion of the banking account. Credit card transactions are limited to the active account through valid requests. Each transaction includes, validating a user credit card prior to the transaction and then presenting, audibly or on screen; activity options including: Card Balance Inquiry, Credit Line Limit Inquiry, Transfer Amount, Transaction History, Account History, and Set Zero Balance. By selecting one of the options the user may display a balance in the active account; a credit limit and a balance in the active account; possible transfer amount choices, a list of card transaction amounts or a list of credit transfers into the active account with corresponding dates and times of execution, and may set the active account balance to zero.

Summary of Invention Paragraph:

[0004] This invention relates generally to banking methods and the use of bank credit cards and debit cards, and more particularly to a method for controlling bank balances so that misuse and fraud is avoided in credit card usage.

Summary of Invention Paragraph:

[0007] Mansvelt et al., U.S. Pat. No. 5,175,416 describes a method of transferring funds including the steps of linking a first "smart card" to a first financial institution, debiting an account held at the financial institution and recording a corresponding credit value in the first smart card. The first smart card is then linked to a second, similar device, the credit value in the first device is reduced, and a corresponding credit value is recorded in the second device. The second device is then linked to a second financial institution, the credit value in the second device is reduced, and a corresponding credit value is recorded in an account held at the second financial institution. The first and second devices each store at least a portion of a program which is run in a synchronized interactive manner between the first devices. The invention extends to a system for implementing the method.

Summary of Invention Paragraph:

[0008] Buchanan et al., U.S. Pat. No. 5,950,179 describes a computer-implemented method for issuing a credit card to a customer who has difficulty qualifying for unsecured credit or who requests a secured credit card. A card request input is received indicating that a customer has made a request for a credit card, and, in response, a credit card account with an initial credit limit is created for the customer. The initial credit limit is stored by computer. A credit card is issued to the customer before receipt of an indication of a deposit to a savings account to secure the credit card. A balance of the savings account is periodically monitored by computer for an initial deposit, and a new credit limit is computed when the initial deposit has been made.

Summary of Invention Paragraph:

[0009] Solokl et al., U.S. Pat. No. 6,173,269 describes a method and apparatus for

various forms of value, including coins, currency, credit, debit, and/or bank account funds, for prepaid cash cards, credit cards, phone cards and the like (100 and 402). In one embodiment, a value exchange machine includes a coin input region (106), a coin sorting/counting apparatus (112), a card reader (202), and a communications facility (113) configured to communicate with a remote computer network. In another embodiment, a value exchange system includes one or more of the value exchange machines connected to one or more remote computers via a communications link (500). A user wishing to purchase, for example, a prepaid cash card can visit one of the value exchange machines, select a desired transaction, and pay for the card with coins, currency, a credit card, a debit card, and/or bank account funds. After confirming payment, the value exchange machine dispenses the card to the user.

Summary of Invention Paragraph:

[0016] The prior art teaches the use of a transaction security apparatus and method, a method for a cardholder to place use restrictions on a credit card, credit cards issued with bank saving accounts attached, funds transfer systems, methods for executing electronic commercial transactions with minors, methods for exchanging and transferring value, credit information in a mobile phone, method for issuing a secured credit card, and an internet cash card, but does not teach a telecommunication method for adjusting a bank account balance when necessary from a remote location and for being alerted when a withdrawal from the account is being made. The present invention fulfills these needs and provides further related advantages as described in the following summary.

Brief Description of Drawings Paragraph:

[0025] FIG. 1 is a logic flow diagram of a first preferred embodiment of the invention which is used when a display device is present such as at a bank or on a computer screen or cell phone screen;

Detail Description Paragraph:

[0029] In the embodiment shown in FIG. 1, starting at the upper left in the diagram, a banking customer slides his/her banking card, ATM card or credit card, etc., collectively herein, "credit card," through a card reader, the card reader has a screen visible to the customer and presents "Please Enter PIN" to the customer. The PIN that is entered is validated by the customer program, in which case an Option Menu is presented on the screen, or it is not validated and the screen presents, "Invalid, Please Re-enter PIN." This retry loop will continue until a valid PIN is entered so that the customer can be recognized, or until a selected number of retries have been attempted, e.g., usually three. The Option Menu enables one to select a desired edit option, including: 1. Card Balance inquiry, 2. Credit Line Limit Inquiry, 3. Transfer Amount, 4. Card Transaction History, 5. Credit Account History, and 6. Set Balance to Zero. Selection is by touch-sense, using a mouse, track ball, numeric keypad or any other electronic selection method.

Detail Description Paragraph:

[0030] For option (1) the current account balance is displayed; for option (2) the credit line limit, outstanding account balance and the net available amount are displayed, where the net available amount is the difference between the credit line limit and the outstanding account balance; for option (3) the user may select from several amounts displayed, the amount desired to be transferred from the credit line to the bank account balance; for option (4) a list of card transaction amounts with corresponding dates and times is displayed; for option (5) a list of credit transfers is displayed in the same manner, and for option (6) active account balances are immediately set to zero.

Detail Description Paragraph:

[0032] In the embodiment shown in FIG. 2, starting at the upper left in the diagram, a banking customer dials an appropriate phone number from any

telecommunications device, e.g., a line phone, a cell phone or any appropriate portable device. The customer hears a recorded response requesting entry of a credit card number which is completed by the customer. The recorded response recites the number entered and asks for confirmation by the customer. Next, in the same manner, the customer is requested and responds by entering a PIN number which is validated or corrected by the customer and thereafter validated. If validation is not possible, an alert is set for possible unauthorized use. Next, as above an Option Menu is presented verbally. The Option Menu enables one to select a desired edit option, including: 1. Card Balance inquiry, 2. Credit Line Limit Inquiry, 3. Transfer Amount, 4. Card Transaction History, 5. Credit Account History, and 6. Set Balance to Zero. Selection is by verbal response or by numeric keypad or any other electronic selection method appropriate to telecommunications.

Detail Description Paragraph:

[0033] For option (1) the current account balance is presented audibly; for option (2) the credit line limit, outstanding account balance and the net available amount are presented audibly, where the net available amount is the difference between the credit line limit and the outstanding account balance; for option (3) the user may select from several amounts audibly presented, as the amount desired to be transferred from the credit line to the bank account balance; for option (4) a list of card transaction amounts with corresponding dates and times is audibly presented; for option (5) a list of credit transfers is audibly presented in the same manner and, for option (6) the customer has the ability to verbally request that active account balances be set to zero.

CLAIMS:

1. A method for establishing control over credit card transactions, the method comprising the steps of: establishing a transaction supporting banking account, a credit limit, and an active account portion of the banking account wherein, credit card transactions are limited to the active account portion through valid requests, wherein each transaction includes, validating a user credit card prior to the transaction; presenting screen options to the user including: Card Balance Inquiry, Credit Line Limit Inquiry, Transfer Amount, Transaction History, Account History, and Set Zero Balance; and selecting one of the options through at least one of a touch sense screen and a keypad; wherein, a) for Card Balance Inquiry, displaying a balance in the active account; b) for Credit Line Limit Inquiry, displaying a credit limit and a balance in the active account; c) for Transfer Amount, displaying possible amount choices; d) for Transaction History, displaying a list of card transaction amounts with corresponding dates and times of execution; e) for Account History, displaying a list of credit transfers into the active account with corresponding dates and times of execution, and f) for Set Zero Balance, setting the active account balance to zero and displaying that the active account balance is zero.

4. A method for establishing control over credit card transactions, the method comprising the steps of: establishing a transaction supporting banking account, a credit limit, and an active account portion of the banking account wherein, credit card transactions are limited to the active account portion through valid requests, wherein each transaction includes, validating a user credit card prior to the transaction; presenting audible options to the user including: Card Balance Inquiry, Credit Line Limit Inquiry, Transfer Amount, Transaction History, Account History, and Set Zero Balance; and selecting one of the options through a keypad; wherein, a) for Card Balance Inquiry, enunciating a balance in the active account; b) for Credit Line Limit Inquiry, enunciating a credit limit and a balance in the active account; c) for Transfer Amount, enunciating possible amount choices; d) for Transaction History, enunciating a list of card transaction amounts with corresponding dates and times of execution; e) for Account History, enunciating a list of credit transfers into the active account with corresponding dates and times of execution, and f) for Set Zero Balance, setting the active account balance to

zero and enunciating that the active account has been set to zero.

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executing electronic transactions with teens, especially where such transactions are limited only to those vendors that have been approved by the teen's parents. In one embodiment, a virtual automatic teller machine (VATM) is provided in which funds are transferred from an existing account, such as a saving account, checking account, or credit card account, to an Internet passport account. The VATM account mimics a bank account, i.e. it gives the user the appearance of an ATM machine. Functionally, the VATM allows the user to transfer funds from an existing account into the Internet passport account. The VATM does this by emulating an ATM machine as it appears to the Automated Clearing House (ACH) system. The ACH system is a separate network from the Internet. Rather than acting as a trustee for a teen account, the invention provides a method and apparatus that allows a merchant to withdraw funds directly from the teen's account automatically at the time of purchase. In this way, the invention provides a system in which funds are not held, thereby eliminating cash advance fees and liabilities associated with trusteeship. A second embodiment of the invention, a global gift certificate, is provided. The preferred second embodiment of the invention is configured to appear as a debit card to the ACH system. In this regard, the gift certificate thus generated is truly global in that it is accepted anywhere it is presented.

Summary of Invention Paragraph:

[0011] Joao et al., U.S. Pat. No. 6,529,725 describes a transaction security apparatus and method including an input device for inputting transaction data, a processing device for processing the transaction data and for generating a first signal corresponding to the transaction, and a transmitter for transmitting the first signal over a communication network directly to a communication device associated with an individual account holder. The communication device provides notification to the individual account holder of the transaction.

Summary of Invention Paragraph:

[0012] Cuervo, U.S. 20010047342 describes a credit or debit card of any kind issued by a bank(s) or financial institution which when issued convey an interest earning savings account opened by the same bank issuing the card. The card may be a Credit or Debit card of any kind, including but not limited to: an Affinity Credit Card; a Gift Card; a Prepaid Debit Card; a Stored Value Card; a Corporate Credit or Debit Card; a Bank Card; a Funded Card, et al. This invention will provide the user a Method and System the benefits of an attached savings account which will, by electronic (EFT) transfers, receive the funds developed by discounts, rebates or rebates offered by participating stores and or service provider entities when purchasing their merchandise or services using the card. Users of this Method and System will benefit from discounts, rewards or rebates to which they may not be entitled when using presently credit or debit cards available. The deposited funds, product of discounts, rebates, rewards or additional deposits made by the cardholder to the Savings Account, may be transferred by the cardholder to increase its debit card stored amount or to reduce an owed balance in a credit card. Withdrawal of funds in full when the card is cancelled. A previous bank relationship is unnecessary and not requested to obtain this prepaid or stored value debit card, for credit cards and bank check debit cards may be required a previous bank relationship of an existing or new checking account.

Summary of Invention Paragraph:

[0013] Wilson et al., U.S. 20020169720 describes a method for cardholders to communicate restrictions on card usability in terms of time, amount, number of charges, and merchants to card issuers through dedicated applications on wireless PDA, cell phone, desktop applications, or Web applications, repeatedly and at will, and for card issuers to evaluate future transactions in terms of these restrictions and authorize or decline those transactions based on the results of those evaluations.

Summary of Invention Paragraph:

[0015] CoinStar, Inc., WO 03/071495 describes methods and systems for exchanging